VOICELESS VOICES

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Editorial

From 'Soul Wound' Pain to Power - Dalits and the Future of South Asia

The First World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen (1995) identified three urgent global priorities: eradicating poverty, creating productive employment, and fostering social integration. For South Asia, a region of more than a quarter of the world population, these are not policy preferences; they are imperatives for survival and justice. Moreover, caste-based discrimination is still prevalence largely in the region. It affects an estimated 260 million people worldwide, the vast majority living in South Asia. Discrimination here is not just economic; it is cultural, social, and deeply institutional. Caste, class, ethnicity, and gender still decide who eats well, who studies, who works, and who leads. It involves massive violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Caste systems divide people into unequal and hierarchical social groups. Moreover, these communities have endured 'soul wound', deep pain caused by generational trauma since they sensed their caste. In Nepal, it is estimated that 65 percent of their cognitive

In 2004, the World Bank traced 'Caste Penalty' of 21 percent for Dalits and 15 percent for indigenous people in Nepal. The Nepal Human Development Report 2020 revealed that the country loses 25.2 percent human development potential each year due to the inequality- most of it rooted in caste hierarchy. It is estimated that the loss translates into at least 10 percent loss in GDP each year along with its chain effect across generations. In both Nepal and India, caste-based discrimination remains the main cause for the inequality has that undermines holistic social progress. Also, the World Inequality Database reports the extent of disparity that exists; the richest 10 percent hold more than 50 percent of personal wealth, while the bottom 50 percent hold at most 10.4 percent. Dalits and discriminated communities mostly lay in the bottom. That means these people have been excluded from economic opportunities since time immemorial. Hence, growth that leaves millions excluded is not development- it is deception. In term of social development it is rather degradation in human life, livelihood and liberty.

South Asia is marked by striking contrasts with fast-growing economies alongside entrenched poverty, glittering cities shadowed by slums, and ancient traditions colliding with modern aspirations. At the heart of its social struggle lies the empowerment of those long discriminated against: Dalits in India and Nepal; bonded laborers in Pakistan; marginalized ethnic groups in Sri Lanka; the hill tribes of Bangladesh; and countless women across the region who face systemic exclusion. The Summit's call for "social integration" means little unless these invisible walls are dismantled. True empowerment in South Asia requires bold reforms: access to quality education across rural and urban divides; land rights and fair wages for agricultural and informal workers; stronger laws against caste- and gender-based violence; and real political representation for the marginalized.

Growth and social development must be measured, as the Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen advocates, with the adjustment of inequality. Affirmative action, targeted welfare, and grassroots mobilization now in practice do not favor to the discriminated; they are just state instruments for keeping status quo. Moreover, the research finds democratic backsliding since 2010 and the regime tending toward authoritarianism. We experienced it in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and now in Nepal. It has not only negative impacts on the lives of discriminated communities but whole the country is pushed back. Hence, despite the first Summit for Social Development 30 years before placed people at the centre of development with the goal of eradicating poverty, promoting productive employment and fostering social inclusion the situation has not been improved as expected. Moreover, the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. But the latest progress report reveals that only 18 percent of targets are on track, 50 percent weak and 30 percent gotten worse with the remaining 5 years. Major gaps revealed in poverty and equality. Thus, these have been the global issues and challenges for each country.

When the World Summit for Social Development declared poverty eradication and social integration as global priorities, it spoke directly to South Asia's deepest wound: the systemic discrimination against Dalits. For centuries, Dalits have been denied dignity, land, education, and justice—relegated to the margins by the cruel hierarchies of caste. Today, South Asia boasts rising economies, but for millions of Dalits the promise of progress remains hollow. Violence against Dalits is routine, their voices suppressed, their rights ignored. How can any nation claim development while its most vulnerable citizens remain trapped in trauma of discrimination? Empowerment cannot mean token inclusion or cosmetic welfare. It must mean land ownership, equal access to education and jobs, and strong legal protections enforced

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Cover Story by Dr. Man Bk and Karna Nepali

World Summit 2025: Renewing the Global Commitment to Social Justice and Inclusion

Thirty years after the landmark World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, Denmark (1995), global leaders are preparing to gather once again - this time in Doha, Qatar, from November 4 to 6, 2025 - to renew their commitment to building a fairer, more inclusive world. The 1995 Copenhagen Summit was a milestone in shaping global development priorities. It brought together more than 14,000 participants, including delegates from 186 countries, with 117 Heads of State or Government in attendance. The summit addressed three major global concerns - poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion - and concluded with the adoption of a Declaration and Programme of Action.

***Dr. Ashwini K P, UN Special Rapporteur, highlights that the issues of discrimination to be at the top of the* Summit.....**

An exclusive interview by Binita Nepali at page no. 6

At its core were 10 commitments that placed people at the center of development, urging all nations to ensure that economic growth and political decision-making were grounded in strong social policies. The Copenhagen Declaration became the foundation for a people-centered approach to development, emphasizing dignity, equality, and participation for all.

In the three decades since, the world has advanced through a series of major global efforts inspired by the Copenhagen vision. Yet, persistent gaps remain. Inequalities in income, opportunity, and access to services continue to divide societies. Millions are still excluded from the benefits of digital progress. Most vulnerable groups like Dalits and other discriminated communities face systemic barriers that limit their participation in social and economic life. Meanwhile, climate change, conflict, displacement and migration threaten to reverse hard-won gains. It is in this urgent context that the Second World Summit for Social Development in Doha will convene. The summit aims to reaffirm the 10 Copenhagen Commitments, promote equality, inclusion, and well-being for all, strengthen global solidarity, and accelerate progress toward the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

In this regard, the VV team has collected several views/bites from the stakeholders from South Asian region where the caste-based discrimination is deeply prevalence and presented as follows;

Thirty years after the historic 1995 Copenhagen Summit, the global community will reconvene in Doha, Qatar, for the 2nd World Summit for Social Development (4–6 November 2025) to renew commitments to social justice and equality. We at Sahayatra International see the 2nd Summit as a timely opportunity for an urgent global call to end caste discrimination and liberate 260 million people from its enduring social injustice. We anticipate Doha Declaration addressing this pressing issue at its core.

Dr. Drona Prakash Rasali
Chair, Global Conference for a Caste Free World 2025

The World Social Summit is not just another conference – it is a rare moment when nations come together to ask: How do we rebuild societies on equality and justice.

We know that in most countries, millions still live on the margins — not only because of poverty, but because of social hierarchies like caste and analogous systems that decide one's worth and work by birth like Dalits in South Asia, Haratine, Oso and others in Africa, Roma in Europe, Burakumin in Japan, Quilombola, Palenque in Latin America. For these Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent, this is the deepest form of exclusion — from education, from dignity, from opportunity.

We call on the world leaders in WSSD to recognize and address these hierarchies, to ensure that social protection, decent work, and access to education and land reach those long kept invisible WSSD must keep its promise — that every community, in every continent, can live with dignity, equality, and hope.

Paul Divakar Namala
Global Forum of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent
The Inclusivity Project

30 years after the Copenhagen Summit and 24 years after the Durban Declaration at the World Conference against Racism, we have yet to see an end to caste-based discrimination – not only in South Asia, but increasingly spreading across the world. How much longer should we wait for the abolition of caste discrimination to take centre stage. IDSN - its members, affiliates and associates say that time is right now! #Endcastediscrimination #Endcaste apartheid

Meena Varma | Executive Director
International Dalit Solidarity Network
WORKING GLOBALLY AGAINST CASTE-BASED DISCRIMINATION

Dear fellow colleagues: It is my honor to welcome you to Doha, Qutar.

For Social Development summit, we must discuss meaningful implementation of 2030 Agenda. Meaningful implementation begins with fulfilling existing international human rights agreements by Member States, private sectors, international organizations, civil societies and the UN systems, which are foundations of universality, equality and non-discriminatory measure, collective well-being and civic engagement.

ICDR stands and applies Dalit justice ecosystem as a holistic framework, seeking to protect lives, reducing inequalities, address caste discrimination, and enhance inclusive representation of Dalits and other marginalized people in democratic institutions, especially for the implementation of the social development agenda 2030. Working with diverse communities from global south to global north, we design and promote principles and achievable human rights practices that work for people. ICDR advocates for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) strategies, inclusive development and action by governments, the UN Systems and corporations. We also influence other systems of power and non-state actors.

The Submit should reinforce the duty of states to mobilize the means of implementation in-collaboration with civil society and all stakeholders – particularly marginalized groups. Findings by the ICDR show that states were (and, are) unable to recognize the inherent dignity of nearly 300 million people locally and globally, who have been facing modern-day slavery of untouchability, caste (work and descent) and gender-based discrimination and violence in Asia, Africa, Middle East, Europe and other parts of world. The majority of these people were out of reach from the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; especially children, women and girls face multiple discrimination and violence based on caste, gender and social status.

The submit must create affirmative actions to fulfill the rights of all vulnerable and marginalized groups, particularly those who face intersecting inequalities based on caste, race, gender, ethnicity, indigeneity, disabilities and status of origin or migrant for the effective implementation and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

D.B. Sagar
President and Co-founder
International Commission for Dalit Rights (ICDR)
Washington, D.C., USA

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without bias. It must mean Dalits in positions of leadership, shaping policy rather than begging for scraps from it.

The Second Summit's vision of development with dignity demands courage from South Asian governments. A society is not judged by the wealth of its elites but by the dignity of its most marginalized. South Asia will only rise when Dalits and other marginalized rise with free, equal, and unafraid. Nevertheless, the Governments still drag their feet. Laws exist but discrimination persists, and development often benefits elites first. In May this year, the stakeholders from around the world gathered in Toronto to design the way out for a caste free world and released Toronto Declaration. Among others, the declaration mentions the need of special UN convention to address the caste-based discrimination as it has hindered the social development in equitable manner and been now a global issue. It is expected that the Second World Summit would be the cornerstone for this.

The Geneva review in 2000 has acknowledged that despite economic growth in many countries, inequality and marginalization had increased, continued to face exclusion from social, economic, and political life, and the globalization, while creating opportunities, was also deepening divides between and within nations. In this context, the Second World Summit for Social Development is expected to reaffirm and expand upon the global commitments first articulated in the 1995 Copenhagen Declaration and the Geneva review. The summit's prospective outcomes are likely to focus on strengthening the international agenda for social inclusion, poverty eradication, and equitable development within the context of current global challenges such as economic inequality, digital-divide, and climate instability.

The Summit is going to be organized whereas the 'Nepo Babies' backlash and 'Gen-Z' protest is roaming around the world. Some countries like Nepal and Madagascar, the government fell down and the new course is already on the way. Nepal's movement has been historic and inspiring to whole the word as the government fell down next day of the movement with the heavy loss of human, physical infrastructure and heritages. The main issue the Gen-Z raised globally is the corruption, disparity, discrimination, democratic backsliding and developmental approaches. As mentioned above the rise of authoritarian regime in the ground of democracy is the root-issue of the governance. Issue of generation equality has been emerged with the Gen-Z movement. The issues the Gen-Z are raising very much coincide with the agendas of the summit. It is expected that the summit will acknowledge the Gen-Z protest while making its political declaration and also commit to engage youths in its implementation.

A key anticipated outcome is the Doha Political Declaration, a consensus document that will renew global commitment to social justice, decent work, and inclusive societies. Unlike previous summits, which were more declaratory, the Doha Summit aims to emphasize implementation and accountability, urging member states to bridge the persistent gap between social development goals and on-the-ground progress. Enhanced monitoring frameworks, better data collection on inequality, and strengthened reporting mechanisms are expected to support this shift toward measurable action. The United Nations has to be more pro-active in monitoring implementation of the declaration. Otherwise it would be a cosmetic event.

The summit is also likely to place social exclusion at the center of its agenda, recognizing it as a multidimensional phenomenon affecting marginalized groups such as Dalits, women, persons with disabilities, migrants, and indigenous peoples. Policies to expand access to education, healthcare, and digital technology are anticipated, alongside commitments to decent work creation, universal social protection, and resilience against crises such as pandemics and climate-related disasters. Moreover, the Doha outcomes are expected to highlight multi-stakeholder participation, promoting collaboration among governments, civil society, cooperatives, and the private sector. Such partnerships are envisioned as essential for achieving inclusive and sustainable social progress. The Summit will likely align its goals with broader global frameworks, notably the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Pact for the Future, and ongoing financing for development processes. It will institutionalize the protective liberalism (Pro-liberalism) as a contemporary economic policy to shape the social development for an emancipatory shift in the lives of Dalits and discriminated communities.

In essence, the Doha Summit is projected to deliver a renewed political momentum for social inclusion, translating past commitments into actionable strategies. Its success will depend on whether the international community can move beyond declarations to implement concrete policies that reduce social exclusion and ensure that the benefits of globalization and technological change are shared equitably among all people. It is also expected as the summit has prioritized the social exclusion in its political declaration in its second point, the discriminated people around the world and; Dalits originated in South Asia and spread globally, will get it an instrumental to convert their soul wound pains into the power of equity and social justice.

We, the Voiceless Voices Team with new arrangement, attribute heartfelt condolence to those who sacrificed their life during the Gen Z movement. We have dedicated this issue of its series to the Summit and express our gratitude to its contributors.

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First of all, warm greetings to everyone from the Lumbini Cultural Municipality. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to share my thoughts at this United Nations International Conference here in Qatar.

As the Acting Mayor of Lumbini Cultural Municipality, I want to highlight that one of the greatest challenges our country faces even today is Social Exclusion which is the major concern of the social development. To address this issue in a sustainable way, we are expecting much from the summit.

Lumbini, the birthplace of Gautam Buddha — the pioneer of Peace, holds immense potential as a religious and cultural tourism hub. Yet, despite its global significance, the region still lags behind in terms of development.

Moreover, as someone from the Dalit community, leading the municipality has not been without challenges. Deep-rooted caste-based discrimination, as well as social and economic inequalities among Madhesi and Hill communities, still make it difficult for some to fully accept inclusive leadership.

I therefore urge this Summit to encourage broader dialogue and action on social inclusion and equality. True development cannot be achieved unless every individual — regardless of caste, ethnicity, or economic status — is treated with dignity, respect, and equal opportunity.

Kalpana Harijan
Acting Mayor, Lumbini Cultural Municipality
Rupandehi, Nepal

Withdrawal of the Reservations on the ICERD

Nepal is among the first countries to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) in 1971. But then Panchayat government kept reservation on the articles 4, 6, 14 and 22 which are the main parts of the convention. Despite constitutional and legal provisions, even after 54 years since the ratification of ICERD, the practices of caste-based discrimination and untouchability remain widespread, dozens of Dalit youths are killed, raped and displaced even after the country was declared Untouchability Free Nation by the parliament in June 2006.

Access to justice for Dalits is almost impossible in Nepal. The prevalent practice of resolving incidents involving Dalits through ad-hoc mediation at the local level systematically denies them the formal justice system. Consequently, they are often intimidated to bear injustices without recourse due to intimidation from local elites, political actors and police. Due to the reservations, Nepalese citizens specially discriminated communities are barred from seeking justice through such international mechanism. Therefore, it is imperative for the Government of Nepal, who are recently formed through Gen-Z movement, to take urgent steps to withdraw such reservations in ICERD. The withdrawal of reservations enables Dalit individuals and groups to negotiate with the state and file a complaint with the CERD Committee if the state processing is not enough. Dalit civil society organizations and human rights defenders must urgently intensify their advocacy for the withdrawal of such reservations so that the state gets pressure on it.

Bhim Pariyar
Human Rights Activist

Until the state itself is free from inequality and stands firmly for justice and inclusion, the voices and issues of the oppressed and marginalized will remain unheard. In Nepali society, caste-based discrimination, poverty, unemployment, landlessness, and untouchability still suppress the lives of Dalit communities. Because of caste discrimination, the younger generation of Dalits could not make their future. I am one such example, carrying a bag of books and a legal battle for "caste justice" for the past seven years, representing the dignity and hope of thousands.

This is not just a personal story of pain; it is the story of countless silent voices that the state has yet to recognize as worthy of national debate. But caste discrimination can no longer be tolerated. Its end must begin at the state level and it must become a matter of urgent national and international dialogue.

The second World Summit for Social Development, the youngsters are hopeful, will bring those hidden lives, struggles, and experiences to the forefront acknowledging that until the voices from the ground are heard, equality and true social development will remain a distant dream.

Dipa Kumari Nepali
Dalit/Youth Activist

Canada Conference: A Gathering for Freeing the Burden of Caste World Over

VV Reporter, Canada

Caste-based discrimination and inequality have, for centuries, inflicted profound harm on individuals and communities, depriving millions of dignity, rights, and opportunity. This entrenched injustice has shaped the social, cultural, and political fabric of societies in South Asia and beyond, perpetuating exclusion across generations. On this, Last May 25-27, *Sahayatra - International Alliance for Social Justice* organized the Global Conference for a Caste-Free World 2025, a gathering of a global community of scholars, activists, policymakers, and affected peoples as stakeholders in Toronto, Canada —to affirm that such systemic oppression must finally be brought to an end.

The Toronto Declaration is a historic milestone in this journey. It represents not only a collective acknowledgment of past and present injustices, but also a shared commitment to chart a future grounded in human dignity, equality, and justice. 17 points declaration provides a framework to strengthen international cooperation, to align with global human rights instruments, and to ensure that no person is left behind as marginalized on the basis of caste or descent. On this regard the chair of the conference, Dr. Drona Prakash Rasali describes it as more than words on paper, rather it is a roadmap for systemic reform, for reconciliation, and for building inclusive societies that uphold the universal values of freedom, equity, and mutual respect. While challenges undoubtedly lie ahead, the Toronto Declaration affirms that the eradication of caste-based discrimination is not merely aspirational—it is both possible and urgent within our lifetime. Subsequent to the Global Conference, a Memorandum for call to action was submitted to the G7 Leaders during G7 Summit at the Kananaskis, Canada. Likewise, the chair of the conference also committed that submission of similar memorandum will be submitted to the international agencies, bodies and platforms. The Conference has also announced that a series of the Global Conferences will be organized over time across the strategic locations around the world. In order to operationalise the Sahayatra as a global network, the individuals, Prof. Dr. Drona Prakash Rasali as the Global Chair, Santosh Bishwkarma as the Secretary General, K.P. Choudhary as the Vice-President for South Asia Region, Dharam Bishwakarma as the Coordinating Diaspora Leader for Nepal, Jai Birdi as the Coordinating Diaspora Leader for Canada and Dr. Man Bahadur Bk, Professor at Akamai University and the Editor-in-Chief of the Voiceless Voices, have been entrusted with responsibilities to progressively expand the network, mandating it to address national, regional and international issues.

CFWC 2025 GLOBAL CONFERENCE FOR A CASTE FREE WORLD 2025
Building Solidarity towards Equality, Social Justice and Abolition of Caste System

Major points of the declaration for Dismantling the System of Caste Discrimination

1. Formal Global Recognition of Casteism
2. Effective Enforcement of Anti-Discrimination Laws
3. Caste Equity Through Educational Reform
4. Community-Led Empowerment and Leadership
5. Establishment of a Global Caste Discrimination Index
6. Intersectional Research and Evidence-Based Policy
7. Aligning Reparative Justice with the SDGs
8. Recognition and Restitution of Historical Injustices
9. Socioeconomic Restructuring and Affirmative Action
10. Youth-Led Caste and Racial Justice Movements
11. Healing Intergenerational Trauma
12. Global Political Representation and Institutional Reform
13. Legal and Policy Transformation
14. Cultural Change and Public Awareness
15. Mainstream Allyship and Anti-Casteism Training
16. Human Rights Training for Migrants
17. Truth and Reconciliation

World Summit for Social Development and Its Way Forward for LDCs

By Prof. Dr. Uttam Gaulee

From Copenhagen to Doha

I still recall reading about the Copenhagen Summit as a young researcher—it felt like the world was finally listening. When world leaders gathered in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1995, for the first-ever World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), it was, at the time, the largest gathering of heads of state and government to address social development issues. The Summit focused on three core commitments: poverty eradication, employment generation, and social integration. The *Copenhagen Declaration* and *Programme of Action* set a global framework, emphasizing that economic growth without social justice was not sustainable. As someone who has followed these global conversations since the first summit, I find the return to Doha especially significant.

Time flies. Have we truly moved forward since Copenhagen? Upon reflection after thirty years, many of those promises remain unfinished, especially for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). While progress has been made in reducing extreme poverty, inequalities have deepened, new crises have emerged, and entrenched forms of exclusion persist.

This November, the world convenes again in Doha, Qatar, for the Second World Summit for Social Development (2025). The stakes are high: the 2030 Agenda is at risk of derailing, LDCs face widening vulnerabilities, and global inequality threatens to destabilize collective progress. The Doha Summit represents not only a moment of reflection on Copenhagen's legacy but also an urgent call for renewed commitments that speak directly to the realities of LDCs.

LDCs and the Burden of Social Exclusion

For the 46 countries currently designated as LDCs, the promise of social development has often been deferred. According to UN DESA (2023), one in three people in LDCs still lives in extreme poverty, with limited access to healthcare, quality education, and decent employment. The UNDP Human Development Index consistently ranks most LDCs at the bottom, not due to lack of resilience or capacity, but because structural inequalities perpetuate exclusion. These inequalities are not only economic; they are deeply social. In South Asia, caste hierarchies continue to determine opportunity, access, and dignity. In parts of Africa, ethnic discrimination shapes who participates in governance and who is excluded from resources. In fragile states, religious or gender-based exclusion continues to marginalize millions. The World Bank has shown that social identity remains one of the strongest predictors of poverty, often more decisive than geographic location or family income.

From the perspective of an LDC, these exclusions are not side issues. They are the very fault lines that hold back development. Without addressing them, poverty eradication becomes a moving target.

A Tangential Note on Toronto

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to reflect on these themes at the Global Conference for a Caste Free World in Toronto. There, I spoke about the legacy of my father, who resisted caste oppression in small but transformative ways. He earned the ire of his own family and became an outcast when he fed rice pudding to the Dalit friends who were assisting to build our house. When one of our buffaloes died subsequently, she was destined to be cursed by the ignorant society who believed he committed a sin by feeding such good food to the low-caste people. He lived a life of a rebel to the tyrant society and as an ally to the Dalits. His story is one among millions that highlight the quiet revolutions taking place in communities across the Global South. But while personal stories inspire, our task at Doha is collective: to transform inspiration into global commitments. The Toronto reflections serve as a reminder of the human dimension behind policy — but the focus now must shift to how the international community will act.

Education as Transformation

At a recent visit to a community college in Nepal, I met first-generation students whose dreams hinge on a single scholarship. If there is one area where social development intersects powerfully with equity, it is education. For LDCs, education is both the most effective pathway out of poverty and the most underfunded sector. UNESCO's 2024 data shows that only 9% of young people in LDCs are enrolled in higher education, compared to over 70% in developed countries. The consequence is clear: entire generations are excluded from opportunities to participate in the knowledge economy.

Education, however, is not only about skills. It is about dignity and belonging. When a Dalit student in Nepal or India enters a university that embraces inclusion, centuries of inherited exclusion begin to dissolve. When girls in sub-Saharan Africa gain access to secondary education, child marriage rates decline, maternal mortality drops, and community health improves. When refugees are integrated into classrooms in fragile states, social cohesion strengthens. But this does not happen by accident. It requires inclusive policies (such as affirmative action and targeted scholarships), diverse faculty who reflect the communities they serve, and curricula that center justice and equity. Higher education becomes not only a tool for employment but also an act of abolition — a means to dismantle entrenched hierarchies.

The Challenges Ahead for LDCs

The Doha Summit convenes at a moment of extraordinary challenge for LDCs as follows:

- Poverty and Inequality: Despite global progress, LDCs lag behind with poverty rates nearly triple the global average.
- Debt Burdens: Many LDCs face unsustainable debt, diverting resources from social spending to debt servicing.
- Climate Vulnerability: LDCs are among the most affected by climate change, despite contributing least to global emissions. Rising sea levels, droughts, and floods threaten livelihoods and food security.
- Demographic Shifts: Nearly 60% of LDC populations are under the age of 25. Without opportunities for education and employment, this demographic dividend risks becoming a demographic crisis.
- Fragile Institutions: Weak governance structures often limit the ability to deliver social protection, healthcare, or inclusive growth.

These challenges are not just statistics—they are lived realities I have witnessed in classrooms and communities across the Global South and I continue to witness micro aggressions even in the developed Doha must acknowledge that the path forward for global social development runs through the empowerment of the most marginalized.

Building on Copenhagen: Lessons Learned

The 1995 Copenhagen Summit was groundbreaking in its vision, but its follow-through was uneven. Key lessons can be drawn: Commitments without accountability remain rhetoric. Copenhagen offered bold declarations, but mechanisms to enforce or monitor progress were weak. Economic growth alone cannot deliver social development. Many developing countries experienced growth, but inequality deepened when redistribution and social protection were not prioritized. Social integration is as important as economic inclusion. Without addressing discrimination and exclusion, poverty eradication remains incomplete. Doha must not repeat these shortcomings. It must combine vision with enforceable accountability, supported by global financing that prioritizes LDCs. Behind every indicator of poverty is a child waiting for opportunity.

The Way Forward at Doha

Put your money where your mouth is. A teacher in rural Nepal, juggling three classes without textbooks, understands better than anyone why education funding must be more than a promise. From an LDC perspective, the Doha Summit should focus on five core priorities:

1. Universal Access to Inclusive Education: Scale up investments in primary, secondary, and tertiary education in LDCs. Expand affirmative pathways for marginalized groups, women, and first-generation learners.
2. Social Protection Systems that Address Identity-Based Exclusion: Design safety nets that explicitly consider caste, ethnicity, gender, and disability. Ensure social services reach those historically excluded from public goods.
3. Decent Work and Employment Opportunities: Create sustainable jobs for LDC youth, particularly in climate-resilient sectors. Strengthen vocational and technical education linked to labor market needs.
4. Cross-Border Solidarity and Knowledge Sharing: Build global alliances that share best practices on inclusion and equity. Empower South–South cooperation to scale successful models.
5. Accountability and Financing: Link Summit commitments to measurable benchmarks. Ensure global financing for development prioritizes social spending in LDCs.

These are not aspirational goals; they are survival imperatives. Without them, the cycle of exclusion and poverty will persist.

A Call for Global Solidarity

The Second World Summit for Social Development in Doha must be more than a symbolic commemoration of Copenhagen. It must be a turning point. For LDCs, the stakes are existential: social exclusion, if left unchallenged, will undermine not only the SDGs but also global peace and stability.

If my father were alive today, he might not understand every technical detail debated in Doha. But he would understand the purpose: to create a world where no child's destiny is written by their birth, caste, or circumstance. His quiet defiance against exclusion in a small village in Nepal resonates with the global struggle for equity. His voice echoes in mine when I advocate for inclusive education. The rice pudding, the buffalo, and his outcast life tell me that we must promote the forerunner of Dalit movement like Dr. Man Bahadur Bk, Dr. Drona, Rasali, and Dr. VK Gahatraj along with some others should be listened to by the policy makers. Doha's way forward must carry that torch — not as rhetoric, but as structural change; not as promises, but as measurable commitments. For LDCs, this is not about catching up. It is about survival, dignity, and the possibility of building a world where development is truly for all.

Author is the professor at Morgan State University, the USA and President of STAR Scholars Network.

Gen Z Movement in Nepal: An Aspiration of Structural Change

By VV Reporter

Kathmandu, Nepal - On September, 8 and 9, 2025 Nepal has experienced a historic movement led by Gen Z (born in 1997-2012) youths. The movement was conducted against rampant corruption, impunity, delay in public service, social exclusion, violation of human rights and finally the social media ban by the Nepal Government. The protest was peacefully started on 8th September specially against social media ban and corruption issues. The uprising was not planned; it was a leaderless open protest. They were simply high school and university students protesting for removal of ban on social media. But the massacre of 19 protesters, some even in their school uniform, transformedinto national fury. The second day became the catastrophic for all people. All three pillars of democracy – the parliament building, the Supreme Court and the Singha Durbar were torched and burnt. The violence was not confined to the federal capital, but at least 300 local government offices across the country were damaged. Some media houses also came under attack, Kantipur Media House, Nepal's largest private outlet, set ablaze. In both human and economic terms, it was among the most destructive 48 hours in Nepal's history. Al together 74 people were killed and about 2,113 injured in the clashes. The economic damage has been preliminarily estimated to be Rs 480 billion worth of private and public sector. The movement has inflicted severe damage on the private sector, with losses estimated at nearly Rs 80 billion, according to the FNCCI. Likewise, about Rs 100 billion worth of government buildings and Rs 4 billion worth of vehicles were damaged. Damages of documents, digital system, heritages are worthless. Moreover, it has huge chain impact in economic progression. On September 10, the prime minister KP Oli resigned, parliament was in ruins, and the army was the only institution maintaining order. In the facilitation of the Army chief, there was the series of negotiation between Gen Z representatives and the president. Finally, on 12 September, President Ram Chandra Poudel appointed former chief justice Sushila Karki as the prime minister, the first female prime minister in Nepalese history, for six months with clear mandate of election on 5 March 2026 and investigate the loses of Gen Z protest including initiative to stop corruption. The president also dissolved the house of representative on the recommendation of the newly appointed prime minister. On 15 September, Prime minister Karki formed cabinet with human rights lawyer Om Prakash Aryal- home minister, former finance secretary Rameshwar Prasad Khanal- finance minister and former NEA executive director Kulman Ghising- energy minister. Ten days after being nominated as the Prime Minister, Sushila Karki added four more members to her Council of Ministers: Magsaysay winner Mahabir Pun, tv anchor Jagadish Kharel, former Justice Anil Kumar Sinha and Samata Foundation chair Dr. Madan Pariyar. Dr Pariyar has been appointed as a cabinet minister from Dalit community which was lacking with the elected government. Prime Minister Sushila Karki expanded her Cabinet with health professional Dr. Sudha Sharma Gautam and youth activist Bablu Gupta for the third time on October 26, 2025. With the latest expansion, the total number of ministers has reached ten. With this the government seems to be more inclusive. However, it is still not proportionate as assured by the constitution of Nepal.

This historical trajectory shows that the Gen-Z movement was not a sudden outburst but the blast of an accumulated frustration specially in youth community. Despite heavy losses this movement has given optimism to people for an aspiration of structural changes.

Social Activist Ashika Tamang Honored with 'Bhim-Maya Memorial Award'

By VV-Reporter

Kathmandu, October 9, 2025—On the day the Gen Z movement completed its first month, well-known social activist Ashika Tamang has been honored with the Bhim-Maya Memorial Award 2025 in recognition of her outstanding humanitarian service, particularly for assisting those injured during the Gen Z movement.

The award includes a cash prize of NPR 50,000 and a certificate of appreciation. It was presented by Dr. Man Bahadur Bk, the founder of the memorial award. Dr Bk is former secretary for the Government of Nepal, professor and former dean for Madhesh University and president of Native Arts and Heritage Academy Nepal. He is the chief editor of the Voiceless Voices. He established the Bhim-Maya Memorial Award in 2005 in memory of his late parents, Bhim Bahadur Bk and Maya Debi Bk. The honor is presented annually to individuals or organizations making notable contributions to social welfare, humanitarian work, or community services. Initially worth NPR 10,000, the award amount was raised to NPR 50,000 in 2012.

Handing over the prize, Dr. Bk highlighted the award's purpose and Ashika Tamang's dedication for social issues and humanitarian works. "As of today, the Gen Z movement has completed one month. During this time, Ashika Tamang provided vital support to

……. *Continued in page 5*

Worldwide 'Nepo Babies' Movement and GenZ Protest in Nepal

☞*Karna Bahadur Nepali*

Background and context of Global movements

The phrase Nepo Babies is a short form of "Nepotism Babies" - refers to the increasing public discussion and criticism of how family connections, privilege and inherited status shape opportunities in diverse sectors like business, politics and beyond. The term acknowledged extensive consideration in the early 2020s, especially in Hollywood and Western media, but its roots and implications are global. This 'Nepo baby' was popular on Social media (especially TikTok and Twitter around 2020-2021 while the handlers instigated the categorizing celebrities who had popular parents. Globally, the movement gained major visibility after a New York Magazine cover story in December 2022 titled "The Year of the Nepo Baby". It identified dozens of actors, models and musicians with connections and it sparked intense debate about the meritocracy vs privilege in pop culture. Hence, the Hollywood became the epicenter of the movement. Such concerns have raised the awareness that access to fame and opportunity often depended on family networks rather than talent or hard work. Subsequently, the Nepo baby discussion was in debate on nepotism in Bollywood. However, the issue resounds in Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka too, where elite families often dominate media, business, and politics. "Nepo babies" exist in politics, and business dynasties. Similar dynamics appear in K-pop, where some idols are children of entertainment executives, and in African politics, where political dynasties (e.g. in Kenya or Nigeria) perpetuate inequality eventually, this has widespread globally and such family networks entrench power and limit social mobility. The Nepo baby discourses has sparked the public accountability, encouraged audiences to questions representation and privilege etc. The worldwide Nepo babies' campaign was also conducted by young people where it sparked in Nepal with GenZ amplified by Social media ban and other social issues. The beginning awareness campaign was also started with #enoughisenough #Nonotagain and #Nepobabies including the negative vibes against lifestyle of political leaders are arising by different stakeholders which has boosted the GenZ movement in Nepal.

The global movements are powerfully happening these days in the name of different forms. E.g. the movement of Srilanka with Debt crisis, Indonesia in the name of increase allowances of parliamentarian, Bangladesh quota system and other countries etc are the recent examples of the global protest especially led by young people or students. On the other hand, warmongers are advocating for the global conflicts and war. These all environments are powering the diverse movements globally.

Gen Z protest in Nepal and Root Causes

Young people are the key foundation of change and the seekers of transformation. It is also observed that all of the movements of the change globally are led by young people because they always prefer good governance, social justice, human rights and equality for all. The Oxfam reports that global wealth is highly concentrated, with the richest 1% owning 43% of all global financial assets, while the wealthiest countries hold two-thirds of global wealth. This data shows the disparity has been arising heavily and existing global system is failing to address the urgent issues of the people. Actually, the global Gen Z movement is ingrained in frustration with problems like corruption, inequality, elite capturing, lack of opportunity, unemployment, injustice, discrimination, misuse and capturing of natural resources etc. However, such protest has escalated into broader demands for political change. In 2025; Youth protesters in Nepal are in the global limelight for their angry response to the government's sweeping social media ban in an apparent attempt to silence their dissent. The government's actions ignited mass protests — led largely by Gen Z, a cohort made up of young people born between 1997 and 2012.

Root Causes of Protest

Before we go through in the GenZ protest in Nepal, it is required to analyze and observe the brief context of the Nepali political phenomena. The glorious history of historical peoples' movements and armed struggles and the sacrifice made by people brought constitution of Nepal 2015 through constituent assembly which ensures an independent, indivisible, sovereign, secular, inclusive, democratic, socialism-oriented federal democratic republican state and the sovereign power is inherited in people of Nepal. However, the governance system is parliamentary democracy system and it exercised the power through parliament. After the promulgation of constitution 2015, there was election in 2017 and 2022, those elections didn't provide mandate to specific political parties with clear majority to lead government with their own and such situation promoted the formation of coalition government. On the other hand, the article 3 of the Constitution 2015 has provisioned the definition of Nation is " having multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural characteristics with common aspirations of people living in diverse geographical regions, and being committed to and united by a bond of allegiance to national independence, territorial integrity, national interest and prosperity of Nepal, all the Nepali people collectively constitute the nation". It shows that the government has to address the diverse mandates of the citizen in the coalition governments. Subsequently, based on the constitutional provision, and performance of mainstream political parties in the government, few regressive forces are also raising their voices as reactionaries. Those coalition governments are failing to address the issues of corruption in covid-19-time, management of Bhutanese refugees in the third countries, government /public lands are in elite capturing, as well as the favoritism, nepotism exist and promoting, the Civic space was shrinking, the role of media limited and the lifestyle of babies of political leaders (Nepo kids) is luxurious. In 2022 election, new political parties also represented in the parliament, they are also raising the issues of corruption continuously and, Other issues like misuse of cooperatives funds, payment of sugarcane, milk-producer, Teachers movement for Education bill, other marginalized groups movements regarding social justice, human rights, discriminations, constitutional commitment of government, implementation of federalism etc are the major issues which were provoking for the civil unrest and dissatisfaction towards performance of federal, provincial and local governments was widespread.While, the Pushpa Kamal Dahal ' Prachanda' Government lost vote of confidence in July 2024 and formed new coalition government of Nepali Congress (NC) and UML, the scenario has become that the NC-UML led coalition was formed to protect the corruption especially Bhutanese refugee Scam, dedicated trunk electricity line etc whereas NC-UML led coalition had justified their alliance to amend the constitution; in reality they didn't. The main opposition party UCPN-Maoist had been campaigning against government delivery and performance including spirit of their political alliance across the nation like ' Hulaki Highway and Pushpalal Highway centered. On the other hand, regressive political forces who follow Monarch and other social activist are also conducting campaign against government performance and public service delivery. The Rastriya Prajatantra Party including "Save Nation, Nationality, Religion, Culture, and Citizens Mega Campaign Nepal, and their groups had demonstrated in December 2024 and April 2025 with some social issues like cooperative, behavior of micro-finance and government performance etc also fueled the GenZ protest in Nepal.

Subsequently, few of the Local government's chief of Nepal were elected Non-party individuals who were provoking more through social media regarding system, delivery and performance of the government from federal to local level. The practice of federalism in Nepal is around 10 years, the government has committed to ensure the rights of people with diverse act and policies mentioning in fundamental rights however the government wasn't able to formulate civil service act, education bill, Dalit acts, adjustment of police and civil servant including centralized mentality is influential with federal government. The rate of Nepali youth going abroad is alarming which contributes around 25% in our GDP. That's in contrast to the children and grandchildren of Nepal's high-profile elite politicians, accused by the protesters of living in the lap of luxury. Gen Z protesters have demanded information about the source of income of Nepal's ultra-rich politicians and their families, and called for a thorough investigation. For a long time, Nepal, with a population of 29.5 million, has been trapped in a poverty cycle. It is ranked 143rd globally in the Human Development Index (2024). The unemployment rate in 2024 for youth aged 15-24 was 20.82 per cent, and it's growing. Reports also suggest that more than 1,500 adults leave the country every day in search of work. In 2021, the Nepal census found that 7.1 per cent of the population was working outside the country and has a median age of 28. In 2023, Nepali workers sent remittances of US$11 billion back home. In fact, estimates suggest that almost 25 per cent of Nepal's GDP is from remittances. There is also growing concern about Nepali worker deaths as people take dangerous jobs; more than 700 workers died from 2018 to 2019 Gen Z frustrations are linked to how their parents leave the country in search of work and do the most high-risk and lowest-paid jobs abroad, which they believe is in stark contrast to the lives of #NepoBabies and #NepoKids.

The young people were heavily frustrated because of unemployment, corruption in each steps of services, lack of opportunities, discrimination and injustice including lack of conducive environment of working. In the meantime, the government decided to ban social media like twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram etc because they weren't formally enlisted in Nepal, however such ban in social media had directly affected the GenZ young people in comparison with others. All these circumstances and environments are the major root causes and significant fuel of the GenZ protest in Nepal.

Gen Z protest is different from other movements in Nepal.

This protest has become unique in Nepali political history because within 27 hours of time, the protest had captured all state mechanisms destroyed and billions of the public and personal properties brunt. It represents a turning point for Nepali politics and the protesters had only three key demands; end corruption, end nepotism and reform the country's political systems highlighting social media ban. Eventually, the interim government led by former chief justice Sushila Karki with clear mandate of election in March 2026 and investigation of protest loses. However, the protest had lost 74 martyrs and more than 2100 injured from this movement.

First, The GenZ is the common group of all spheres regardless political belief, religion, caste, geography etc, it is led by young people. Second, social media is their main means of communication. Third, these people have global access of information, communication and technology heavily and have been closely assessing and observing the movements of other countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Indonesia etc. These young people are dissatisfied with government service delivery and performance that working-class people are struggling to meet basic needs everyday and facing inequality, discrimination and poverty. Therefore, the few differences of GenZ protest in Nepal outlined below:

Led by Young people (Gen Z): The protest was led by GenZ with common agenda regarding social media ban and ending corruption including it wasn't ideology-based movement so included all walk of GenZ in one platform.

Use of Digital platform: Some Gen Z social media users tracked the account of the children and grandchildren of ultra-reach politicians and shared or reposted images and videos of their luxurious lifestyles. Social media engagement surged on posts with these images and with hashtags that included #Nepobaby, #NepoKids, #PoliticiansNepoBabyNepal and #Corruption. Some Gen Zs also made short videos on TikTok and Facebook highlighting corruption, inequality, poverty and nepotism; those videos also went viral. All of these issues resounded with many Nepali Gen Zs, spurring them to join the protest movement. In addition, young people used discord after the social media ban.

Social media ban: Before and in the Sept. 8, Gen Z's protests were peaceful and mostly took place online. But when the government instituted a ban on social media, Gen Z exploded, with many claiming that the decision was aimed at silencing their voices. Gen Z is the social media generation, and the ban was regarded as a violation of their rights. They soon took their demands to the streets from the screen, calling for the resignation of the prime minister.

Leaderless Movement: This was primarily the leaderless movement, they had appleaed the young people to participate in the demonstration peacefully and draw the attention of the government in the urgent issues especially social media ban. Hence, the political analyst has been sharing in the diverse platform that the political history of Nepal, Rana Regime was abolished in 104 years, Panchayat system in 30 years, Multiparty democracy with constitutional Monarchy in 15 years, constitution of Nepal 2015 was promulgated in 10 years of time (2005-2015) whereas the GenZ protest captured country within 27 hrs and enforced to rethink about the governance system of Nepal to decision-makers.

What could be the Future direction of Nepal

The GenZ movement is the historic and turning point to restructure the nation if the stakeholders initiate positively. The people also discussed on the influence and intrusion of other party in the protest however the first thing is internal environment of ours, If the internal environment itself is disorganized and divided, then external factors also try to play into it and fulfil their own interests. Moreover, the Nepal's bureaucratic system is lethargic and buck-passing and not practiced on e-governance, it exacerbated the public service delivery and galvanize the anger and dissatisfaction of the citizen towards government. Along with it, the Dalits, Women and other Marginalized communities have been experiencing diverse discrimination, untouchability including traditional harmful practices and it undermines the social integration and establishment of egalitarian society. In this backdrop, the future direction of Nepal should be ensured inclusive Interim Government, Investigation of GenZ protest fairly, emphasize to ensure the full proportionate upcoming election through amendment of election act, investigation of corruption properly since at least 1960 and Inclusive and effective public service delivery should be ensured in all levels of government. Therefore, at this time, the GenZ movement has shaken the roots of the centralized and discriminatory mentality, but has not uprooted it. So, this is the perfect time to restructure the state to ensure equality, Social justice and Human rights.

Native Arts and Heritage Academy: Promoting Heritage Learning in Nepal

By Geeta Chaudhary

Nepal is a country of diversity with Dalits, indigenous people and aboriginal communities who have their own cultures, traditional knowledge, skills and occupations. In fact, around the world, these

are the drivers of human civilizations over ages, inventing weapons, agricultural equipment, clothing, housing, health healing and even the community-ruling mechanisms. Certain occupations have specific ritual, ceremonial or spiritual dimensions or functions. Sadly, many of these traditional skills and knowledge are under threat and disappearing. Thus, our journey began to work on native skill arts and culture. On September 15, 2021, a consultation meeting was held with like-minded academicians, professionals and concerned stakeholders regarding campaigning for a specific academic institution, probably the University for Native Arts and Culture as specified in the National Education Policy, 2013 and formed a preparatory committee. The committee organized a series of meetings/seminars/webinars, consulted with concerned ministries and submitted letter of intent. Need of an institutional set-up to make the campaign stronger and undertake some related activities was felt. Accordingly, the "Raithane Shilpakala tatha Sampada Pratisthan Nepal" translated name in English 'Native Arts and Heritage Academy Nepal' has been incorporated under the trusteeship model on 2022/08/10 — a sacred space where hands learn, hearts connect, and heritage thrives. Over the years, we've grown into a vibrant hub for cultural learning, artistic exploration, and community collaboration. It has collaboration with the Akamai University/USA for the academic activities, National Innovation Center for technical advancement and Raithane Agri Product Nepal for marketing. Additionally, the academy is a founding member of the United Nations University's Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCE), Kathmandu and member of Planetary Health Alliance facilitated by Johns Hopkins University.

In addition to campaigning for the university, the Academy has been running several academic activities on the subject matter. It has planned mapping the native skills, arts and culture available at the local levels, linking it in the school course and having a learning centre in the community level. We have also prepared to start summer/winter schools on various related subject under the open space learning approach. The first one being 'Climate Change and Green Growth Development' going to be running soon. The most impressive program it has been conducting is the online 'Heritage Learning Dialogue Series'. Till the date we have administered the four dialogues especially on Indigenous knowledge, Buddha education, Legacy of Ambedkar, Issues of native communities etc.

Some Testimonial Cases of Caste Atrocities in Nepal: No One Cares

By Dr. Dinesh Chamar

Several Caste-Based atrocities reported in Nepal more in Terai-Madhesh within a month specially in the festive sessions. Most festivals are dominated with the Hindu hierarchical order. Some of the major festivals have been observed as the discriminatory practices in Nepal. The worshiping in temples is the main part of the festivals and Dalits are denied for visiting temples even though they also follow the Hindu practices since time immemorial. The more wondering is that the local government's officials commit such atrocities based on casteism happens more in Terai-Madhesh. It is the general practice that the perpetrators escape with apologies as the concerned authorities fail to enforce law despite Nepal's constitutional guarantee of equality and the 2011 law criminalizing caste-based discrimination, incidents of untouchability and social exclusion continue unabated mostly across Terai-Madhesh region. In just one month, several incidents of caste-based discrimination against Dalits were reported — most ending with mere apologies instead of legal punishment. Some of them are presented here as the testimonial atrocities of Nepal.

Incident 1: **Dalit Families Rendered Homeless in Siraha**

In Kalyanpur Municipality–8 of Siraha District, five families from the Paswan (Dalit) community were forcibly evicted and their homes demolished during the Dashain festival as per the instruction by the ward chairperson, right in front of police personnel. The victims — Raj Kumar Paswan, Rasalal Paswan, Ashok Paswan, Binde Paswan, and Sobhita Paswan — were left homeless. Police arrested Ward Chairperson Ram Kishore Yadav, Ganesh Kumar Kamati, Kailash Singh, and Manoj Kumar Yadav. According to District Police Chief Anantaram Sharma, a criminal case was filed against 13 individuals, with four arrested and main accused Prabhas Singh along with nine others still absconding. Various organizations and the local municipality provided temporary relief. Dalit rights activist Surendra Mahara stated: "We are standing with the victims until they get justice. Such attacks on Dalits cannot be tolerated."

Incident 2: **Dalits Denied Participation in Worshiping Durga**

Sarlahi in Kabilasi Municipality of Sarlahi District, the Durga Puja Committee collected donations from the Paswan community — ranging between Rs. 100 and Rs. 1,000 — but later denied them from participating in the worship after non-Dalit locals objected for. According to local resident Rohit Paswan, "The committee took money from us but did not let us join the worship. They even stopped us from offering sacrifices at our own Salhesh Temple." After the issue escalated, the village head mediated a meeting where non-Dalit leader Ram Ishwar Yadav apologized on behalf of the perpetrators, and the case was settled through a written reconciliation. It is a case that despite such atrocities is against law the village stakeholders mostly from so-called upper caste conclude with the memo of understanding. Not only that some time the local police office also manages such understanding,

Incident 3: **Chamar Community Excluded from Practicing Religious Ritual**,

Bara in Kalaiya Sub-Metropolitan City–17 of Bara District, members of the Chamar (Dalit) community contributed donations for a local Durga Puja. However, during Ghatasthapana, organizers declared that allowing Dalit women to participate in the Kalash Yatra (sacred procession) would be "inauspicious." As a result, nearly 170 Chamar households were excluded from the religious ceremony. Representatives from the Chamar Welfare Society Nepal, including Sunita Chamar and Nandan Chamar, filed formal complaints at both the District Police Office and District Administration Office, Bara. Although puja organizers later apologized, no legal action followed. Dalit activists expressed frustration, saying that such settlements "encourage impunity and undermine justice."

Incident 4: **Dalit Youth Beaten for Wearing Slippers**

Phulkoul, Bahadurmaya Municipality–7 of Parsa District, 18-year-old Sujan Kumar Chamar was assaulted by Hriday Narayan Yadav and others for wearing slippers while walking on a public road. The attackers shouted, "How dare you, a Chamar, wear slippers? Where did you buy them? Do you think you're above us?" The incident was later settled locally in the presence of the ward chairperson, again through an apology. No legal process was initiated.

Incident 5: **Dalits are discriminated in worshiping in temple**

Dalit community of Taman Rural Municipality Baglung were discriminated during the group worship in Odanthan temple on October 04, 2025. As per the locals it happened on the occasion of Nawami of Dashain festival. There was a group worship and few of the local ethnic (Chhantyal) community boycotted the feast because it was cooked by Dalits. After that Dalit community felt discriminated and untouchability in the temple. Local social leaders from the ethnic community accepted the guilt and committed not to repeat such cases in the future. The incident took place despite Tamankhola Rural Municipality has already adopted a policy to end untouchability on September 2023.

Incident 6: **Dalit girl suspected rape and murder**

Reshmita Pariyar, 27, of Diprung Chuichumma Rural Municipality-4, Khotang, was found dead under suspicious circumstances. Reshmita, who worked at the Ajambari Small Farmers Agricultural Cooperative Society in Sachhitapokhari of the same rural municipality, was found dead on the night of 15 September in the Marse Community Forest, located between Hyakule and Ramitedanda in Batase about 150 meters below the road. The police have secured the incident site with the help of locals. The police suspected raped and murdered given the nature of the scene. She has a husband and a daughter according to locals.

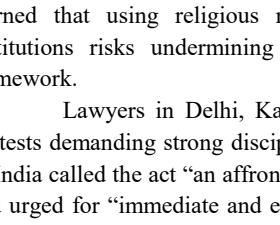
Growing impunity, weak enforcement: Activists warn that the increasing use of "apology settlements" instead of prosecution is eroding confidence in the justice system. Despite the Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2011, enforcement remains weak, particularly in rural Madhesh. Dalit representatives fear that government inaction is fueling impunity and normalizing discrimination. As one activist noted, "When perpetrators walk free after apologizing, it sends a message that Dalit lives and dignity don't matter."

Access to justice is hindered when police fail to register and investigate cases under the law. Rather as reported by the stakeholders, the police often registered such cases under other laws which has the effect of downplaying the discriminatory motives of the offence and dilute the severity of caste-based discrimination. On this regard, the Amnesty International published a report entitled "No One Cares: Descent-based Discrimination against Dalits" in 2024. The Director for Gender and Racial Justice Programme rightly mentioned, "The authorities in Nepal are not doing enough to counteract the culture of impunity for human rights violations related to descent-based discrimination in Nepal. Efforts made by authorities are still inadequate, and insufficient, and they seem to exist only in paper but do not translate into real changes in the lives and human rights of Dalits, Dalit women and girls in particular"

Shoe Thrown at Chief Justice of India in 'Sanatan's Name' Sparks Casteism

By VV Reporter, India

New Delhi— A shocking incident inside the Supreme Court on Monday has triggered nationwide outrage after a lawyer hurled a shoe at Chief Justice of India (CJI) Bhushan R. Gavai, shouting slogans in defense of "Sanatan Dharma." The attack, unprecedented in the country's top court, is being condemned not only as contempt of court but as a grave threat to India's democratic and social fabric. During a court proceeding on October 6, advocate Rakesh Kishore reportedly stood up and threw a shoe toward CJI Gavai while shouting, "Sanatan ka apmaan nahi sahenge" ("We will not tolerate insult to Sanatan Dharma"). Security personnel quickly detained Kishore, and proceedings resumed under the Chief Justice's direction.



CJI B.R. Gavai at the background of the Supreme Court of India. Photo courtesy: PTI

CJI Gavai, who hails from the Scheduled Castes, is only the second Dalit to hold the office of Chief Justice of India. Analysts and Dalit rights groups said the attack carries caste overtones, particularly given that it was carried out in the name of "Sanatan Dharma" — a phrase increasingly invoked in political and religious discourse. "This is more than an act of contempt," said a senior advocate. "It's an attack on what Justice Gavai represents — a Dalit at the peak of judicial authority. That's what makes it dangerous."

The incident comes amid a heated national debate over remarks by political leaders on "Sanatan Dharma." Experts warned that using religious rhetoric to justify attacks on institutions risks undermining India's secular constitutional framework.

Lawyers in Delhi, Karnataka, and Telangana staged protests demanding strong disciplinary action. The Bar Council of India called the act "an affront to the dignity of the judiciary" and urged for "immediate and exemplary punishment." Several political leaders expressed concern that the outburst was not an isolated incident but part of a larger pattern of rising intolerance. "Animosity against the poor and the downtrodden is prevailing in society," said Nagina MP Chandrashekhar Azad, linking the attack to deeper caste and communal tensions.

The incident has reignited discussions about caste prejudice, religious extremism, and the fragility of institutional respect in a polarized political environment. Many see it as a warning that ideological intolerance is seeping into spaces once considered beyond its reach. As one social activist observed, "If even the Chief Justice from Dalit community can be attacked in his courtroom what might have been happening to normal Dalits in India." It symbolizes the severity of caste-based discrimination even today.

New appointment from Dalit Community in senior level state mechanism during the period.

Justice Shyam BK

Shyam Kumar Bishwarkarma has been appointed as a high court judge and took the oath of office and secrecy at High Court Dipayal on August 13 making the total number of judges seven from Dalit community. Born in Shabhapokhari, Sankhuwasabha, he holds LLM from TU and a background as a lawyer and human rights activist. He served as Chairperson of the Justice and Rights Institute-Nepal (JuRI-Nepal) and as a Central Executive Member of the Nepal Bar Association.

Agri Minister Dr. Madan Pariyar

Dr. Madan Prasad Pariyar, an expert in climate and agriculture, took charge as the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development on September 22 in the interim Government. Born in Rajbiraj, Saptari, Pariyar has worked with dozens of national and international organisations lastly serving as the chairperson of Samata Foundation. In 2011, he also served as the chair of the High-level State Restructuring Commission. Pariyar also served as general manager of Udayapur Cement and Agricultural Tools Factory in Birgunj. He holds PhD in Agri-engineering from the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok.

AIG Dambar BK

Dambar Bahadur BK has made history by becoming the first Additional Inspector General (AIG) from Dalit community in Nepal Police. The government promoted him to the AIG on October 9. Born in Dang District, BK began his career as an officer at the National Investigation Department on December 20, 1996.

Ashika Tamang *…….. Continued….. from page 3*

those injured and in need. I am honored to present this year's Bhim-Maya Memorial Award to her in memory of my parents." He also expressed pleasure that the amount will be reached through her to the needy injured Gen Z youths for their treatment.

Last year, the award's fund was redirected to support earthquake relief efforts in Jajarkot, western part of Nepal, continuing its tradition of contributing to urgent humanitarian causes.

Interview

The Declaration of the Summit must be Revived and Redefined in Today's Context

Dr. Ashwini K.P.

Dr. Ashwini K.P. is the current Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance under the United Nations Human Rights Council (UN HRC) mandate. She was appointed in that position by the United Nations Human Rights Council in October 2022. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism was established to examine issues of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance globally. The rapporteur investigates situations, engages in country visits, prepares thematic reports, makes recommendations, and promotes the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) as one of the key frameworks. Last Month she made an official visit in Nepal and observed the situation of the discriminated communities.

Ashwini K P was born in Chikkaballapur near the city of Kolar, India. She is from the low marginalised Hindu caste known as the dalits and her parents were V Prasannakumar and Jayamma. Her higher education started studying history, Economics and Political Science at Bangalore's Mount Carmel College. She graduated and went on to obtain a master's degree from St. Joseph's College in Political Science. She then took her doctorate in New Delhi in South Asian Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Focusing to the World Summit the VV editor Binita Nepali has an exclusive interview with her and here are the excerpts.

What are the key gaps or agendas that remain unaddressed since the 1995 Copenhagen Summit?

The 1995 Copenhagen Summit laid the groundwork for global social development through commitments to combat poverty, foster employment, and ensure social integration. Despite these pledges, critical gaps remain after three decades. The aspects related to marginalised communities remain unaddressed. Racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia and other related intolerance continues to manifest in different forms affecting racially and ethnically marginalised groups. The systemic racism and its new manifestations largely remain unaddressed. The Copenhagen agenda demanded holistic action, but national strategies still fall short on intersectionality. Issues like digital exclusion, climate-induced displacement, gendered poverty, and structural racism and racial discrimination require frameworks that actively dismantle social hierarchies and promote accountability.

What is the significance of the Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) for discriminated communities?

The Second WSSD is a turning point, providing a long overdue platform for historically discriminated communities—including Dalits, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, and others—to demand authentic structural change. Unlike many previous global gatherings, WSSD2 is foregrounding accountability and anti-discrimination as cross-cutting principles. For victims and survivors of caste and descent-based exclusion, this summit is not just symbolic but offers a practical mechanism for elevating their concerns to the highest international levels. UN Special Rapporteurs—including mandate holders on contemporary forms of racism and discrimination—have repeatedly documented how caste systems violate basic human rights and dignity. Their findings emphasize the urgent need for dedicated monitoring bodies, affirmative action, legal aid for victims, and the integration of descent-based discrimination into wider anti-racism frameworks. For discriminated groups, the WSSD embodies a chance to shift global norms by insisting that development can never be realized without substantive equality-can the summit deliver on its promise to "leave no one behind."

What needs to be revived or redefined from the Copenhagen Declaration in light of the changing global and regional context?

The principles of the Copenhagen Declaration—solidarity, equality, and inclusiveness—are as vital now as in 1995. However, the Declaration must be revived and redefined in today's context of technological disruption, environmental threats, mass migration, and renewed identity-based conflicts. The Declaration must expand to recognize employment in the informal and digital economies, extend social protection to new sectors, confront residential and occupational segregation, and embed explicit anti-caste discrimination norms in international social policy.

How can the governments of South Asia push their issues in the WSSD 2025? What are your expectations from them at WSSD?

South Asian governments hold a pivotal role at WSSD 2025 given the region's deep entwinement of caste, poverty, gender, and climate vulnerabilities. To push these issues effectively, governments must present robust, data-driven analyses and actionable commitments—on ending caste segregation, promoting rural employment, ensuring gender equity, and preparing for climate adaptation. The CERD Committee, in multiple concluding observations and General Recommendation No. 29, highlights the urgent need for national laws, independent oversight, and mandated reporting on the status of descent-affected communities. Internationally, South Asian states should form strong regional coalitions to ensure that their realities—rife with informal labor, disaster susceptibility, and entrenched discriminatory practices—are not eclipsed by broader global narratives. My expectation is that governments move beyond rhetoric towards policy innovation, community engagement, and periodic review mechanisms.

The trust in international institutions among the discriminated communities, and in general, is eroding. How can an event like the WSSD rebuild trust in international institutions?

The erosion of trust in international institutions is one of the defining concerns of our era, especially for communities systemically excluded by discrimination, violence, and neglect. This distrust stems from unfulfilled promises, a lack of accountability, and the exclusion of lived experiences of marginalized groups from high-level decision-making. Historic exclusion, combined with the failure to deliver justice and enforce rights, often leads to perceptions of tokenism and even complicity of international bodies in perpetuating the status quo. Rebuilding trust requires practical, transformative action. WSSD 2025 can play a catalytic role by shifting from symbolic engagement to authentic, transparent, and sustained participation of discriminated communities throughout all stages of the summit.

What new forms of inequality does the WSSD include in the discussion, as technological advancement, environmental change, and political tensions are reshaping the world?

The world is witnessing rapid transformations that both create new opportunities and deepen longstanding inequalities. WSSD2 places special emphasis on recognizing and addressing emerging divides—most notably those stemming from technological change, environmental disruption, and political instability. These forms of inequality intersect with older axes like race, caste, and gender, producing complex patterns of marginalization.

At WSSD, these discussions are centered on intersectional strategies: rights-based climate resilience, regulated tech governance, digital inclusion, and frameworks to address algorithmic bias. Only by addressing these emerging inequalities in tandem with existing forms can the Summit hope to build an equitable and inclusive future.

You have closely studied intersectional discrimination as the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism. How do you see caste-based discrimination in the region fitting within the broader international human rights framework?

Caste-based and descent-based discrimination occupy a unique (though under-recognized) place in the international human rights framework. Over the past decade, global forums have increasingly recognized that caste operates as a system of inherited inequality—affecting rights to dignity, education, occupation, land, and basic justice.

Intersectionality is vital to this analysis. As highlighted by the Special Rapporteur's recent reports and UN Women, caste discrimination rarely acts alone—it invariably intersects with gender, poverty, disability, sexual orientation, and religion, producing compounded harms for the most vulnerable, especially women and girls. The UN's current approach is shaped by a growing commitment to intersectional methodologies.

Yet, the international human rights system remains, in many ways, a work in progress—often fragmented by siloed treaties and single-issue mandates. To be effective, the framework must fully integrate intersectionality and explicitly reference caste and descent as prohibited grounds for discrimination. Doing so would align global practice with local realities, opening practical pathways to transformative justice for caste-affected populations.

Caste-based and descent-based discrimination remains systemic in South Asia despite constitutional guarantees, national and international frameworks. What should be done to effectively address this issue?

The persistence of untouchability, violence, segregation, and exclusion from public resources and opportunities points not to a lack of laws, but to a deficit in enforcement, social awareness, and political will.

Effective solutions start with acknowledging the scale and depth of the problem and moving beyond denial or token reforms. Governments must strengthen and fund independent human rights commissions, ensure prompt and impartial investigation of violations, and offer reparative justice for survivors.

In summary, addressing caste-based discrimination demands a holistic approach that synchronizes legal reform, educational transformation, data-driven accountability, and genuine participation. Only then can constitutional and international promises be realized for millions facing entrenched exclusion.

How can the issues of discriminated and marginalized communities be included meaningfully in the WSSD beyond token participation?

Meaningful inclusion, beyond tokenism, starts with a reframing of representation. Marginalized communities must be equipped and empowered to participate in all stages of the WSSD: from agenda-setting and preparatory consultations to high-level panels and outcome drafting. This means moving from mere attendance to co-design, decision-making, and review.

Best practice models—cited in UN social development and human rights literature—stress the creation of formal advisory councils or working groups composed largely of affected individuals and organizations. Funding and logistical support must be allocated directly to grassroots representatives to ensure their voices are heard above institutional and governmental actors.

Additionally, the summit should make use of participatory digital platforms enabling remote input, transparency in proceedings, and real-time feedback from civil society globally. Public commitments to inclusion must be translated into quotas or minimum participation targets, with regular indicators tracking the impact of consultations and recommendations in final policy frameworks.

What message would you like to give to civil society organizations and youth activists working against discriminatory practices in the region?

To the civil society organizations and youth activists resisting discriminatory practices: your efforts are the backbone of lasting change. The struggle against caste, descent, and other forms of institutionalized inequality is arduous, sometimes thankless, but it is essential for upholding the dignity, justice, and future of our societies.

The UN, and other international bodies are listening more intently than ever to grassroots leadership. But global change arises from relentless local action and sustained demands for justice. Challenge institutions; hold governments accountable; but also lead with compassion and inclusiveness. Your movement is both a mirror and a model for democracy in the region and worldwide.

Carry hope, persist with courage, and continue to transform society from the ground up. The future of social development, justice, and human rights depends on your determination—and, ultimately, the realization of rights for all.

Consultative Dialogue on Gen Z Movement and Upcoming World Summit

By VV Reporter

Kathmandu, Nepal — Series of dialogues on the achievements and future direction of the Gen-Z movement have been organizing by various organizations. On 27 September, an interactive program was organized by Dalit Civil Society Nepal in collaboration with Janautthan Community Micro-Finance Institution, with around 40 participants representing diverse backgrounds including Gen Z youths. The meeting also served as a preparatory consultation for the upcoming Second World Summit 2025, to be held in Doha, Qatar. Dr. Man Bahadur Bk, the chief editor of the Voiceless Voices, shared strategic insights on both the Gen-Z movement's trajectory and Nepal's advocacy priorities for the international forums. He highlighted the significance of the upcoming World Summit and emphasized the need for Nepal's Dalit movements to connect with global justice frameworks. Some participants highlighted the need to bring caste-based discrimination, untouchability, social exclusion, landlessness, and structural inequality to the forefront of the global development agenda. They emphasized that these issues must be raised strongly at the Second World Summit for Social Development, noting that Dalit communities in Nepal and South Asia continue to face deep-rooted marginalization and systemic injustice.

Likewise, as a follow up dialogue, Dalit Civil Society Nepal organized October 28 and reviewed the progress of the interim government specially in the field of inclusivity. It revealed that still the cabinet is not proportionately formed and urged to apply the constitutional provision of proportionate representation in all the state mechanism. Mean time Dalit Gen Z Youth Alliance has been formed in the convenorship of Jeeban Tiruwa (Jajarkot)

In the programme a book entitled "Participatory Economic Development" written by Dr Nanda Nepali has been unveiled. The author of the book, Dr Nanda Nepali and Dr. Man Bahadur Bk spoke about the book.

In both the programmes, Karna Bahadur Nepali presented the objectives and background of the interaction. Gen Z youth participants along with Raksha Bam and Jeeban Tiruwa shared their views on how Nepal's Gen-Z movement could help build a more inclusive and equitable society. The event was chaired by Motilal Nepali with Mr. Keshar Auji serving as the master of ceremony.

Second International Conference on Geolinguistics Held in Nepal

By Dr. Aita Bishwakarma

Geolinguistics Society of Nepal (GSN) had organized the Second International Conference in Nepal on 29 & 30 August, 2025. The conference was held at Nepal Academy, Kathmandu and the chief guest was Dr. Gopal Thakur, chairperson of the Language Commission of Nepal. Some 39 research papers were presented from India, Bangladesh, Japan, the USA, Russia, Canada and Nepal. The theme of two-day International Conference was *Geolinguistics Trends: Language Contact, Conflict, Policy, and Pedagogical Practices.* The researchers focused on language policy, pedagogical practices, theoretical and methodological concepts, models, aspects of Geolinguistics, visions and voices of marginalized languages in and around the globe.

President of American Society of Geolinguistics, Professor Hikaru Kitabayashi from Daito Bunka University, Japan was distinguished guest at the conference. The keynote speaker was Professor Grigory Kazakov, president of Amici Linguarum and Professor at MGIMO University, Russia was keynote speaker. Similarly, Amrit Yonjan, member of Language Commission and Prof. Hikaru Kitabayashi were the plenary speakers. Dr. Man Bahadur Bishwakrma, former Secretary of Nepal Government and the president of Native Arts and Heritage Academy Nepal, was present at the conference. A panel discussion was also conducted among the linguists, teachers, researchers and language practitioners of Geolinguistics from Nepal, Japan, Russia and Canada. The panelists for the discussion were Drona Rasali, from Canada, Hikaru Kitabayashi, from Japan, Grigory Kazakov from Russia and Kailash Rai from Nepal. The discussion was moderated by Dr. Aita Bishowkarma, Faculty of Bishwa Bhasa Campus, Tribhuvan University. The conference declared First International congress on Geolinguistics to be held in Tokyo, Japan in 2027 in the leadership of Professor Hikaru Kitabayashi.

Geolinguistics Society of Nepal (GSN) a voluntary organization working as a platform for linguists, pedagogues, researchers, planners, policy makers and language teachers and learners established in 2021 arranges all the logistic and managerial support to the conference under the leadership of the president, Dr. Aita Bishowkarma. The society has devoted to the pursuit of researching, disseminating and publishing of up-to-date knowledge on language contact and conflict, language planning and policy, multilingualism and polyglottery, language pedagogy and education.

Asia Pacific Social Forum 2025 to be held in Bangkok

By VV Reporter, Thailand

Thailand – The Asia Pacific Social Forum 2025 is scheduled to be held from November 1 to November 5, 2025, at Thammasat University in Bangkok just before the World Summit for Social Development. The Forum will bring together grassroots movements, civil society organizations, youth activists, labour unions, indigenous groups, discriminated communities, environmental defenders and other stakeholders from across the Asia-Pacific region.

Organizers promise a five-day programme featuring over 100 workshops, thematic plenaries, a solidarity march along Bangkok's historic democracy route, cultural nights and outdoor events. Participation is broadly open: individuals may attend free of charge, while organizations wishing to host sessions can register for a modest fee. A key objective is to enhance regional coordination—movements and civil society across the Asia-Pacific will have a chance to build alliances and share strategies for social justice, climate action, democratic rights and inclusive governance. The event arrives at a time of heightened focus on decentralized civic movements and youth-led change in the region. The organizers say APSF 2025 is intended as a space where "Another World is Possible" which was the main slogan of the 16th World Social Forum 2024 held in Kathmandu, Nepal. With Bangkok as host city, civil society actors are expecting vibrant engagement, cross-border collaboration and fresh momentum ahead of the next global forum cycles.

The forum's agenda on equality, inclusion and social justice aligns strongly with issues faced by Dalit and marginalized communities in Nepal. Participation could amplify these voices regionally in the forum. It can serve as a bridge between national activism and global solidarity movements. Learning from other Asian context experience and forging collaborations becomes possible. As the event is going to be held after the Gen Z movement Nepalese organizations can prepare inputs that highlight specific demands such as meaningful proportional representation, revision of election acts, caste-equity in governance, financial institutions' role in uplifting the most vulnerable communities.

Supreme Court Ruling Seen as Racial Profiling in US

By VV Reporter, USA

The Los Angeles mayor, Karen Bass reacting to the supreme court's decision.
Photo courtesy: AP

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday, September 8, lifted restrictions on federal immigration patrols in Los Angeles. In a 6–3 decision issued Monday, the justices cleared the way for federal agents to resume roving patrols in the region. The ruling overturned a lower court order that had barred immigration officers from stopping people based solely on race, language, type of work, or location.

The immigrant rights groups said that the court decision has effectively legalized racial profiling and threatens constitutional protections nationwide. The case stemmed from a series of aggressive immigration sweeps across Los Angeles earlier this year. Plaintiffs alleged that agents had indiscriminately targeted Latino residents and Spanish speakers without reasonable suspicion, in violation of the unlawful searches and seizures.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the first Latina to serve on the court, issued a forceful dissent, warning that the decision permits government agents to detain anyone who "looks Latino, speaks Spanish, and appears to work a low-wage job." Likewise, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass condemned the ruling at a news conference in a heavily Latino neighborhood where federal raids earlier this summer sparked mass protests. "The Supreme Court has now given the green light for law enforcement to profile and detain Angelenos based on their race," Bass said. "We all dissent."

Immigrant advocates said that the decision would embolden racial discrimination in immigration enforcement. "Immigration agents are now being given the power to profile, stop, detain and arrest people because of the color of their skin, the language they speak or the work that they do," said Armando Gudino, executive director of the Los Angeles Worker Center Network and a plaintiff in the case. "They have effectively legalized racial profiling." California Governor Gavin Newsom also denounced the court's move, calling the decision "a parade of racial terror in Los Angeles." He vowed to challenge what he described as "Trump's private police force." He also mentioned that it is deliberately to harm California's families and small businesses.

However, the Department of Homeland Security praised the ruling as a "massive victory," declaring that agents would continue to "flood the zone" in Los Angeles. U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi added that the decision frees immigration enforcement from what she called "judicial micromanagement." While the Supreme Court's order allows the use of race as a factor in immigration stops, the matter is not yet settled. A federal judge is expected to hold a hearing later this month on whether to reinstate broader protections while the case proceeds through the courts.

Across Los Angeles, immigrant families are again bracing for unannounced stops, detentions, and the uncertainty that comes with them. The move has been taken as the tighter immigration policy of the Trump's administration creating fear to the immigrants. Public safety has been weaponized. A flashing blue light no longer signals a ticket — it now carries the threat of detention, separation, or worse. Because of these new measures, families of color are afraid all over the country. They avoid calling the police, they avoid driving, they withdraw from civic life.

Upcoming COP30 as the 'People's COP'

By Binita Nepali

Just following the Second World Summit for Social Development in Qatar, 30th Conference of the parties (COP), the annual global climate conference under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), will be held in Brazil from 10 to 21 November 2025. This year's COP is expected to be particularly significant for Native/Indigenous communities, as Brazil aims to include the largest Indigenous participation (approx. 3000 indigenous participants) in COP history.

Brazil, home to the world's most biodiverse ecosystems and Native/indigenous communites, has called COP30 the 'People's COP' for its Amazon location and the significant decision expected for Native/Indigenous communities and discriminated groups. Brazil's presidency has established an International Indigenous Commission and numerous "Leadership Circles' to ensure Indigenous voices feed into the negotiation processes directly. It has also launched several training courses for Indigenous diplomats, and expanded access to information in Indigenous languages. Besides, it preparing to propose a plan to establish Tropical 'Forests Forever Fund (TFFF), pledging that 20 percent of its resources for Native/Indigenous communities.

Several studies show that the Native/Indigenous communites that live in tandem with natural environments respond to the impacts of climate change more innovatively. And they have high level of environmental integrity and willingness to protect natural resources and biodiversity where their livelihood depends. Their native skill, arts and knowledge offer unique, diverse, and sustainable ways for protecting valuable resources and adaptation. Globally, they protect over 80 percent of the world's biodiversity and planet's richest ecosystems.

However, their voices are rarely heard in the global negotiations, and resources rarely reaches such communities. Hence, centering their voice in the global negotiation is more important than ever and the very first step towards ensuring climate justice.

The COPs in recent years have slowly advanced this cause. COP21 introduced stronger reference to Indigenous rights in the preamble of the Paris Agreement, while the COP24 established the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP). COP 30 aims to deepen this inclusion, offering countries like Nepal an opportunity to champion Native/Indigenous stewardship of mountain ecosystems, secure greater finance, and revive initiatives such as Nepal's Mountain Initiative, envisioned to unite mountain nations for a shared mountain agenda.

Native communites in Nepal such as Indigenous, Dalits and other marginalized groups are on the frontlines of melting glaciers, floods, and landslides. It is reported that 80 percent of the households, mostly Dalits and indigenous, are in the disaster-prone areas. The changing climate is threatening their livelihood, cultural heritage, and very existence. Yet, their traditional job, centuries-old practices of forest stewardship, water conservation, and communal resilience hold significant lessons for sustainable climate adaptation. Whether these issues will be recognized at COP30 depends largely on the government's effort. Amid the changing political landscape followed by Gen Z protests, there is hope that the new government will energize its climate diplomacy and ensure more representatives from such communities in the country's delegation to COP30.

Caste Discrimination Complaints Possible in Australia

By VV Reporter, Australia

Australia has now become the first country outside of South Asia to enable a dedicated complaints mechanism for caste-based discrimination. The Australian Human rights commission confirmed that caste-based discrimination falls under section 9 of the Federal Racial Discrimination Act, 1975 and ILO 111 – under the ground of social origin that covers discrimination on the basis of caste, socio-occupational category and class. Dr. Ambedkar International Mission, Australia issued a press release on 25 October and acknowledged that this is the result of the advocacy and petitioning by Dr.Asang Wankhede of Shree Guru Ravidass Shabha and Ambedkar International Mission.

The atrocities of casteism in Australia range from physical assault, the practice of untouchability faced by Dalits, to more covert forms of discrimination. Now the interpretation establishes the clear mechanism for an individual to lodge a case of caste-based discrimination formally to The Australian Human rights commission. Dr.Asang Wankhede, one of the petitioners claims that it is the first in its kind globally outside South Asia.

Success Story

A Visionary Entrepreneur Navin BK: From China to the US and Dubai

By VV reporter, Dubai

In the bustling streets of Bur Dubai, just beside Al Ghubaiba Metro Station, stands a name that has become synonymous with trust and community — Appsung Mobiles. For thousands of Nepalese workers in Dubai, it's more than a mobile store; it's a place of hope and belonging. At the heart of this story is Navin BK, the man whose vision and compassion transformed a business into a global brand. Building Global Industries Navin's entrepreneurial roots trace back to China, where he lived and worked from 2005 to 2021. During those 16 years, he established a successful export–import business that supplied goods to India, the UK, the USA, Bangladesh, and Nepal. Through his company, he not only traded but also helped export technology and played a key role in establishing industries across Asia and beyond. His ventures supported the rise of factories and production lines in areas such as: nonwoven fabrics making machines, weaved belt machines, stainless steel industries, cookery machine manufacturing etc. By linking technology providers in China with entrepreneurs abroad, Navin became a bridge for industrial growth, helping businesses take shape from the ground up.

After China, Navin shifted his focus to the United States, where he founded Han & BK Inc., doing business as Fivestar Mobile, in Maryland. Starting in the highly competitive used cellphone market, he built a trusted supply chain by sourcing devices directly from T-Mobile, Verizon, and AT&T. With this foundation, Navin expanded to Dubai, where he launched Appsung Mobiles — a store that became a trusted destination for high-quality used iPhones, iPads, and Apple Watches. In fact it is more than a store rather a community haven for the Nepalese community in Dubai. Under Navin's leadership, the store provids free food and accommodation for stranded Nepalese workers, turning it into a symbol of generosity and solidarity. His social responsibility has made him a respected and beloved figure, with many calling him "Brother Navin."

Navin has Franchise Dream. Few years ago, he started one shop has now grown into multiple branches, and he has opening doors for others through franchise opportunities. With a proven model that generates, as he reports, an estimated $150K monthly turnover and $20–30K in gross profit, he has been empowering aspiring entrepreneurs to thrive while growing the Appsung and Fivestar brands globally. He is not only a business entrepreneur but a man with vision and heart. Despite his global ventures; from China's factories to America's supply chains to Dubai's vibrant markets — Navin remains grounded in his philosophy: "Business is not only about making money, it's about giving back to the society, creating opportunities to Generation Z, and making people feel valued." His journey serves as an example of how determination, vision and compassion can transform not just industries, but lives. He is the inspiring entrepreneur to many of the Nepalese youths to grow globally. He is originally from Chitwan, Nepal.

Book Review

Caste A Global Story: Stories of Caste-based Discrimination from around the World by Dr. Suraj Milind Yengde

by Ravindra Nannavare

Caste A Global Story by Suraj Milind Yengde was first published in 2025 by Allen Lane, Penguin Random House India, ISBN 9780670096321 (Hardcover), pp. i–374, priced at INR 899. The book includes a foreword by Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen.

This 374-page book, written in six chapters, traces caste as a global issue and explains how Indian policy decisions limited international advocacy against caste-based discrimination. The Ambedkarite international community sustained efforts in different parts of the world and established networks based on the philosophies of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Buddha. Their lobbying with governments led to the formation of laws against discriminatory practice .

The central idea of the book revolves around caste as a global issue. As Dr. Ambedkar stated in *Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis, and Development*, if Hindus were to migrate to other parts of the world, "caste would become a world problem." The introduction examines caste as a problem that was not created by the British but strengthened during their rule in India. Dr. Ambedkar interpreted the Vedas, the oldest scriptures of Hinduism, highlighting how untouchables were gradually placed on the outskirts of villages.

To strengthen the argument for caste-based discrimination in India, the author mentions that in 404 CE, the Chinese Buddhist monk Fa-Hien visited Mathura and observed the presence of the Chandal, known as "wicked men," who lived separate from others. During the Mughal and post-Mughal periods, caste became more rigid, demonstrating that untouchability was not a product of British rule but had originated in India through texts like the Vedas and Puranas, and was later made more stringent by the Manusmriti in the second or third century CE.

The book also discusses the role of organizations such as the Indian Scheduled Caste Federation and the Dalit Panthers in efforts to eradicate caste-based discrimination. It examines the contributions of Laxmi Berwa, Yogesh Varhade from the USA, and the late Raju Kamble, who have taken up caste-based discrimination at the international level.

Chapter 1: Colonial Dalitality – Census and Castes

The first chapter examines how caste and Dalit identity changed during British rule in India. The British made the caste system more rigid, but their policies also prompted non-elite groups to organize and fight for their rights. The colonial state transformed caste from a flexible social system into a fixed hierarchy, often drawing on European racial theories. For example, Sir Herbert Risley's *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal* attempted to prove racial differences among castes by measuring skulls, a claim later rejected by B.R. Ambedkar

Author say's that caste existed long before British rule but was reshaped by colonial policies. Ambedkar emphasized that caste, rather than race or ritual purity. Dalits actively resisted oppression, often following spiritual leaders like Nanak and Kabir, or using "disguised promotion" by changing names, accents, or behavior to succeed in caste-neutral spaces. Ambedkar also fought politically for separate settlements for Dalits, despite opposition from Gandhi.

Chapter 2: Affairs of Letters – Dalit Responses to Black Literature

This chapter explores the growth of Dalit writing and print culture and its connections with Black literature from America. Both Dalit and Black writers used literature to protest injustice, express identity, and demand equality. From the nineteenth century, thinkers such as Pandit Thiruvenkatasamy, Iyothee Thass, Rettamalai Srinivasan and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar started newspapers and journals including *Sooryodayam*, *Parayan*, *Vital Vidwansak*, *Mooknayak* and *Bahishkrit Bharat*

Post-Ambedkar, Dalit literature became a vital tool for expressing pain, pride, and protest. Writers like Raja Dhale drew inspiration from Black American literature, Gangadhar Pantawane, through his journal *Asmitadarsh*, promoted Ambedkar's ideals of self-respect, equality, and freedom, advocating literature as a means for inner change and social transformation. The chapter concludes that true solidarity between Dalit and Black movements requires joint efforts for justice, equality, and human dignity, linking local struggles in India to global movements such as Black Lives Matter and it also critiques writing dominant caste groups in the USA face racial discrimination, they stand against it; yet, in India, these same dominant caste groups discriminate against Black people living here but other hand dominant castes migrated to the U.S. benefitted from affirmative action.

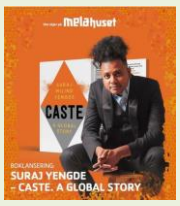
Gangadhar Pantawane said: Dalit is not a caste but "a symbol of change and revolution. Pantawane argued that Dalit literature did not emerge from Black or Marxist thought but from Ambedkarism because Ambedkarism is Indian, self-enlightened and introspective. It envisions a humanity and society free from bondage. Dalit literature he said is "a literature of self-discovery rejecting dominant castes, analyzing conditions and seeking self-disclosure." The author further highlighted that while Dalit-Black solidarity is essential, efforts to build networks and solidarity in India have beenlimited, and we need to strengthen them.

Chapter 3: Dalit and Black Movements – Connections and Differences

This chapter compares the Dalit movement in India with the Black movement in the United States. While both face oppression, their contexts differ. In the U.S., the 1960s witnessed powerful Black protests, such as the 1967 Newark rebellion, and the Kerner Commission warned of a divided America. Police violence and systemic racism persisted, leading to renewed protests following the deaths of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd.

The 2020 Black Lives Matter movement received global support, but in India, reactions were limited, with some celebrities condemning racism abroad while ignoring caste-based violence at home. Crimes against Dalits rose from about 46,000 in 2019 to over 50,000 in 2021. Caste oppression remains rooted in Brahmanical traditions, continuing even after conversions to other religions. Early connections between Dalit and Black activists include Ambedkar's exchanges with African American thinkers, inspiration drawn by the Dalit Panthers, and later diaspora advocacy. The chapter concludes that real solidarity requires challenging caste and privilege within one's own society rather than symbolic gestures.

Chapter 4: The Republic of Diaspora – A Case Study of Trinidad



This chapter examines how the Hindu caste system was transformed and adapted in Trinidad after Indian indentured laborers migrated there. Initially, caste barriers weakened due to shared living conditions, hard labor, and close contact between different groups. Yet caste did not disappear; it re-emerged in new forms tied to identity, social prestige, and religious life. Brahmans retained influence by controlling temples and religious organizations.

Religious texts like the Ramayana shaped Hindu identity. Lower-caste Hindus adopted the story of Ram in inclusive ways, sometimes inspired by Kabir, to challenge Brahman authority. Over time, priesthood became more open, with non-Brahman men training as priests and performing rituals. Organizations such as SWAHA promoted orthodox Hindu traditions, while groups like the Kabir Panth Association spread anti-caste messages among non-Brahman Hindus.

Caste continues to influence identity in subtle ways, including marriage preferences, temple leadership, and ritual practices. Terms like "Chamar" became insults and are rarely used publicly. Leaders like Ravi Maharaj, influenced by Hindu nationalism, promoted Hindu pride and unity while maintaining orthodox beliefs.

Chapter 5: Cosmopolitan Dalit Universalism – Dalit Activism and the Promise of an Anti-Caste World

This chapter situates anti-caste struggles within transnational social justice movements. It traces the Dalit diaspora, distinguishing the old diaspora of indentured laborers sent to colonies like Trinidad and Fiji from the new diaspora of educated and professional migrants in the UK, US, and Canada. Laborers were often politically engaged and fearless, associating with parties such as the BSP, while professionals remained cautious, accepting Ambedkarite ideals intellectually but rarely challenging entrenched caste hierarchies.

Cosmopolitan Dalit Universalism positions Dalits as global human rights actors, such as Laxmi Berwa in the USA and Bishan Dass in the UK. Diaspora organizations engage in advocacy, education, cultural celebrations, and protests, promoting Ambedkarite principles—social justice, legal equality, and economic redistribution while countering casteist ideologies abroad. These efforts connect local struggles to broader global movements like Black Lives Matter.

Global Ambedkarite organizing combines street-level activism with professional networks, fostering consciousness, challenging right-wing narratives, and mobilizing international allies. Dalit identity and activism have transcended Indian borders, becoming a global moral and political force, showcasing diverse forms of resistance and the promise of a global anti-caste movement.

Conclusion: Biography of Dalit Agonism-Field Notes the Diary of an Archivist

The conclusion highlights the historical and global dimensions of caste oppression, drawing parallels between the Dalit struggle in India and the Black struggle in the United States. Overall, the book demonstrates how caste, diaspora, and cultural expression are intertwined. Historical labor systems, migration, literature, and political activism collectively shaped Dalit identity and resistance, connecting local struggles to broader movements for justice and equality, and underscoring the ongoing relevance of Dalit agency in pursuing social transformation worldwide.

The book does not mention the establishment of the Jai Bhim Network in Hungary in 2006 by Derdák Tibor, a former Hungarian parliament member, and Roma leader Orsós János, nor does it acknowledge the key role played by Kshama Sawant in making Seattle the first U.S. city to ban caste discrimination or fails to capture Vikas Tatad's contribution for putting caste in protected category of University of Columbia. Recognition was possible because Kshama Sawant and Vikas Tatad were both staying in US.

Book reviewer Ravindra Nannavare is a self-driven development sector professionals. He resides currently in Mumbai India.

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